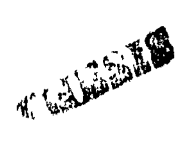
Chapter - Three

A Prolific Writer of Islam



Maryam Jameelah is quite a well-known figure in the Muslim world now. She is one of the greatest contributors in the Islamic world because from a very early age she was more interested to read the different religious books. At the age of nineteen years she was a student of New York in the University of Rochester. She developed a keen interest in religion. Immediately she changed her environment and looked towards other faiths. Her search brought her into contact with an array of spiritual orders religious cults and world religions. She became acquainted with Islam around 1954 AD. Later on she concentrated on studying the Islamic literature and met mature Muslim Ulama all over the world. Through her readings in Islam she developed a bond with the religion and became a vocal spokesperson for the faith, defending Muslim beliefs, criticizing the western culture, and championing such Muslim causes as that of the Palestinians. Her views created much tension in her personal life, but she continued to pursue her cause. She devoted herself to the more serious pursuit of self study through the books available in the libraries. Thus she started her literary career with the defense of Islam. Then she began to write the essays and articles in order to advance the Islamic awakening as that of the Muslim Digest of Durban, which has became too popular in the Islamic literature.[1]

After embracing Islam her literary career began to be as a respected contributor in the Islamic literature and wrote much more than articles, essays, reviews and pamphlets on the defense of Islam. As a result she has written more

than two dozen books for the Islamic cause, after migration to Pakistan in the 1960s in order to escape a bleak future in America. There she continued her study on Islam and wrote many books on it in which she showed her penetrating insight into the wisdom of divinely revealed Islamic faith and its way of life vis-à-vis contemporary west's shallow and superficial approach to human life and morals. Today she still continues to correspond extensively with many Muslim leaders, scholars, writers and converts from around the world.

Some of her more important works are; *Islam and Modernism*, *Islam Versus the West*, *Islam in Theory and Practice*, *Islam and Western Society*, *Islam and Orientalism*, *Islam and the Muslim Woman Today*, *Islam Versus Ahl al- Kitab Past and Present*, *Ahmad Khalil's Biography:* the *Story of a Palestinian Arab Refugee and his family*, etc. Most of these books are very famous and most readable. Besides she also has written many books on different themes and is continuously writing in the Islamic World Book Review of London.[2]

Some of her works are described below in detail:

1. Islam versus the West

The book has included a collection of 18 essays she wrote in America between 1954 and 1962 AD, most of these she wrote before she embraced Islam, in which she has exposed the evils of modern western materialism and its

influence upon both the western Orientalists and the indigenous modernized Muslims in different countries.[3]

First of all she has given in the introduction her story "How I became interested in Islam". Then she discussed in detail critically the ideas of the westernizers within the Islamic world. Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, Ziya Gokalp, Ali Abd al-Raziq, Khalid Muhammad Khalid, Taha Hussein and Asaf A. Fyzee are selected systematically for refutation of their ideas. All these authors in her opinion have resorted to an unscrupulous distortion of historical facts each attacking from a different angle in order to prove that Islam is compatible with modern western civilization.[4]

Maryam Jameelah is a great admirer of the revivalists like al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun of Egypt. The two Muslims of this century highly praised by her are Sayyid Qutb and Allama Muhammad Iqbal. The book ends with a negative answer to the question. "Is westernization inevitable?"[5]

Maryam Jameelah in her analysis successfully applies a critical approach and proves how the westernized scholars and intellectuals attack Islam from within and why they are so dangerous. The learned author guided by her inner conviction, argues, in these essays, why Islam cannot be reconciled with the spirit of the modern west and points out how Islamic society can survive without compromising any of the principles of Islam and still flourish in the modern world. She discussed it in many essays of her book such as, "The

Philosophical Source of Western Materialism", "A Critique of Islam in Modern History", "The Enemy from within ..." "A Refutation of the Philosophy of Ziya Gakalp", A Discussion of from Here we Start".

In an other article she explains the poetry of Muhammad Iqbal and describes as the poet of Islam whose two notable works "The Secrets of the Self" and "The Mysteries of Selflessness". Though these poems were composed more than forty years ago, their message is an appropriate for today as it was then, says Maryam Jameelah.[6]

Iqbal argues, elaborates Maryam Jameelah, that only by the self-affirmation, self-development, and self-expression of superior individuals can the Muslims once more become strong and free. The source of individuality is however, the formation of deals and translating them into vigorous action. Here Iqbal condemns passive religious like Buddhism and Hinduism and decadent.

The individual, however; has no meaning in isolation from society. It is only as a member of a community based firmly on the principles of Islam that the individual can achieve fulfillment of his potentialities. And it is only through an association of super individuals that society is preserved. The characteristics of a true Islamic society is described in Iqbal's second notable work, "The Mysteries of Selflessness". The Islamic community is based on common beliefs, transcending geographical boundaries, language and race. All

his life, Iqbal remained a passionate foe of modern nationalism and here he denounces it in the strongest possible terms, elaborates Maryam Jameelah.[7]

In this collection of essays she makes a brilliant analysis of the folly and futility of distorting the principles and spiritual values of Islam in a vain attempt to prove their compatibility with the material aspirations and drive or aggrandizement that set apart the spirit of the modern west.

Thus she is firmly opposed to the so-called Westernizers within the fold of Islam and with eloquent reasoning. She argues that Islamic society can flourish and contribute its own in a technocratic civilization without having to sacrifice the inner principles of its being.[8]

Shaikh Muhammad Ashraf of Lahore finally completed publication of this book. Afterward this book was sent to the Oriental Division of the New York Public Library and other areas of the world.[9]

The book also refutes Professor Asaf A. Fyzee, the then vice-chancellor of Kashmir University who holds the view that the Quran is responsible for the degraded position of Muslim women; for the fact that in the Muslim world "Women are regarded as the mere playthings of men and seldom as a life companion, co-worker or helpmate". To which this argument he quotes the Quranic verse which says: "Men are in charge of women because God has made one of them to excel the other" (The Quran, 4: 34). But as usual with such attacks, says Maryam Jameelah he distorts the meaning of the sentence by

omitting the vital phrase, "and because they spend of their property for the support of women". Even today in the most advanced progressive western countries the husband remains the head of the house because on his shoulders falls the family. Although the working woman's wages may supplement the family income her responsibility in this respect is still far less than that her husband.

That men excel women in intellectual and creative attainments is indisputable fact, the book unveils the truth boldly. Although there have been many fine women artists, writers, and musicians, there has ever in the entire history of the world, been any woman writer to equal Shakespeare, no woman artist on a par with Rembrandt, and no woman Mozart or Beethoven. Madame Curie has often been cited as an exception in the scientific field, yet it is doubtful if she could have achieved what she did without her husband. Then too, it must be remembered that God never sent a woman prophet like Abraham, Moses or Jesus.[10]

2. Ahmad Khalil: (The Story of a Palestinian Arab Refugee and his Family)

This book is dedicated in memory of the late Mufti of Jerusalem, Haj Amin Al-Hussaini (1895-1974) who sacrificed his entire adult life for preserving the sanctity of Bait ul-Muqaddas and upholding the religious, cultural and cultural rights of the Palestinians against the ruthlessness of Zionist

colonialism. Since the story was written by a convert from Zionism who herself witnessed all the ups and downs, her treatment of the whole tale is superb. The story consisted 31 chapters; the first part deals with the early childhood of A Ahmad Khalil, a Palestinian refugee living in a small village in southern Palestine its surroundings and details of the various members of his family, ending with their tragic expulsion from their homes during the 1948 Palestine war and the total destruction of the village by the superior military might of the Zionists.[11]

The book was first published in Pakistan. In India Academy of Islamic Research and Publications Lucknow brought out a thoroughly revised and enlarged edition.

The story of printing the novel is too interesting. The author herself had described it in detail in her *Memoirs*. One of her friends in America Robert Thabit met her in the lobby of a hotel to discus with her his reactions after a reading the novel. He told her that he had changed his mind about the book and would not recommend it for his publishing house in Beirut. "Much, much too sad and depressing was his comment". He did not like the author's graphic portrayal of the poverty and the primitive "backwardness" of Ahmad Khalil and his family. "The story is nothing but poverty, hunger, sickness and death – who wants to read about that?" He thought the worst part of the book was her detailed portrayal of Ahmad Khalil's younger brother, Khalifa, who had been

afflicted with insanity since early childhood. "Khalifa was real enough!" he exclaimed and then added: "I hope that Khalifa was not you under another name. Here you have an insane man deserted by his wife, much too much to bear, poor man. And then when the harvest fails, he slowly starves to death – a terrible fate, terrible! Even worse than the actual portrayal of this terrible poverty and backwardness is that Ahmad Khalil has no desire to change his way of life – rather, he hates modern civilization and resists it all he can."

> "Even if *Ahmad Khalil* can never be a literary success, says the author, "it means more to me than anything I have ever written. And the drawings as illustrations express everything I have tried to say in my writings, only in a different medium, *Ahmad Khalil* is the last representative of Palestinian indigenous culture and must suffer all his life for upholding it."[12]

In its review on the first edition of the book, the *Pakistan Review* in Lahore writes 'Her treatment of the whole tale is superb'. Besides the elements of suspense and surprise, vivid description and good characterization sustain the reader's interest at a high-pitch.

The plot from beginning to end is so well-woven that the reader's interest never sags. According to *The Criterion* of Karachi 'the characterization of the sensitive boy, Khalifa whose life is haunted by the brutality of the Israelis shows that the author is capable of presenting psychological realities'.

The pen-portraits of Ahmad Khalil his brother Khalifa and his cousin, Rashid are very well drawn.[13]

This story of the Palestinian Arab refugee and his family tells inspiringly the indescribable hardships faced by the Palestinians as a result of Israeli aggression as well as the social and intellectual conflict to which the entire Arab world has been facing due to the technological superiority of the west. Ahmad Khalil parts successfully convey the quit piety of those who live in true humility before Allah. The book catches the religious dignity or the common Muslim family living next to the soil where women are modest and hardworking and the men brave and industrious. The characterization of the sensitive boy, Khalifa, whose life is haunted by the brutality of the Israelis, shows that the author is capable of presenting psychological realities. Many people in the west believe that the Israelis have a better right than the Arabs to Palestine because they are "progressive" and have made the desert bloom. The poor and the backward deserve the worst that comes to them. Ahmad Khalil is a stirring repudiation of this theory of "progress".[14]

The images portrayed by Maryam Jameelah are very beautiful, like that of Ismail, an adopted son of Ahmad Khalil, who came back from Al-Azhar, Cairo to his home for the holidays was now twenty years old and had grown so tall and straight with a gentle manner and a quiet dignity. The joy and

enthusiasm Ismail had experienced in Cairo as a boy were now gone. His face was somber and sad. Expresses his sadness the adopted son addressing him:

> "Father, you can not imagine the terror in Cairo under president Gamal Abdul Nasser where nobody is safe from the spies and secret police. It is growing worse and worse. I could not write you about this because all out-going letters are censored. Most of my friends belonged to *al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun.* Whenever we had time to spare, we used to gather all the poor children in the neighbourhood to teach them the Quran and feed them what we could. My friends were so dear to me that I wanted to join them. I promised that I would be happy to share all they must suffer but they pleaded with me to return home at once and never try to meet with them again. Since then, almost all of them have been arrested by the police, tortured and imprisoned for no crime. I do not know where the others have gone. Oh Father! Don't force me to go back!"[15]

3. Quest for the Truth: Memoirs of Childhood and Youth in America (1945-1962)

She also wrote her autobiography in two parts. Her 1st part "The Memoirs of Childhood and Youth in America (1945-1962)", in which she has demonstrated her veiled face in the photograph which prefaces her books, may

have wondered at the phenomenon of a Jewish-American lady converting to Islam and migrating to a third world Muslim country. Maryam Jameelah's many writings are dealing with the truth of Islam from which have inspired several generations of young Muslims.

The *Memoirs* starts with a lengthy letter from her mother addressing the author from New York in February 18, 1963 describing the very interesting aspects of Margaret Marcus's childhood, her family background, the poverty and severe economic depression that had gripped her country at that time, and that how she was born and nourished in a very bad condition. Her mother also narrated her expertise in playing the Chinese-checkers, jack-stones and badminton and that camps had filled several weeks of her summers and she had enjoyed the Girl-Guides as a faithful member, that she had abundant energy, excellent physical health and was seldom ill with serious ailment. She was considered exceptionally brilliant and gifted by all her relatives and friends. Her art work was always highly praised in school and her beautiful singing voice was great assets. There were many happy occasions during her childhood such as visits to the zoo and family picnics, long walks together, auto drives into the lovely Westchester country-side, their trips to Savannah to visit their grandparents and cousin Helene's wedding there. The Memoirs is too interesting and inspiring.[16]

4. At Home in Pakistan (1962-1989)

She detailed her migration to Pakistan and her adjustment to the radically different way of life there, in the next book "*At Home in Pakistan* (1962-1989)" as part II of her autobiography in which she described on advise of the late Maulana Maudoodi thirty years ago when she came to live in Pakistan and settled down as a member of his family in Lahore. Maryam Jameelah is very honest in her story about her adjustment there. Describing the hardships and trails, which she willingly undertook, she also told of her personal differences with Maudoodi. She has written wistfully in her preface that the actual ideals and goals of the Maulana's re-interpretation of Islam were very far from the traditional orthodoxy, in which she said that "I sought to live and immerse myself. I did not fully discover until long afterwards." She nevertheless is eternally grateful to him and out of respect dedicates the volume to him. Actually her life was one of a comfortably off, educated and respectable girl, in America before she embraced Islam. She felt very guilty in the Jewish society.[17]

5. Islam and Modernism

This book is a collection of her 26 essays dealing with the latest trends in Muslim thought resulting from the impact of western Philosophy. She has given a deep analysis of the most influential modernizers in Egypt, Turkey and the Indo-Pak subcontinent and convincingly refutes their fallacies from the viewpoint of the original teachings of the Holy Quran and the Sunnah.[18]

She made a searching criticism of the philosophical sources of western materialism, modern philosophy and the fallacy of modernism. She is displaying the futility of the apologetic approach of Muslim modernists towards Islam. She demands that they should put an end once and for all interpreting Islam through foreign criteria and summon the courage to stand up and defend an unadulterated Islam. She upholds Islam in its pure form and stresses the necessity for a re-evaluation of Islamic history in that light. The book is composed in a lucid style and is of very useful reading.[19]

Like every true Muslim, she is convinced beyond doubt that Islam alone offers the most satisfying answers to all the great questions of life, being the most comprehensive and vigorous faith which can resist and ultimately triumph over the evil of secularism and materialism. She wrote with full commitment on Islam and demonstrated the significant events of her life in it. She has also described her migration to Pakistan where she is living in the permanent residence at the home of her husband's family in Lahore.

The book of Maryam Jameelah has intended for European and American scholars of Islam and their disciples in the Muslim lands. The essays of the book have been written with the fervent conviction that modern cultural values not only differ but conflict with the teachings of Islam and that any attempt to compromise the latter with the former will end in the destruction of the way of life Muslims have always cherished.

In these essays she attempts to prove that Muslims have no alternative but to reject all un-Islamic modes of life like as modernism and strive to practice the faith exactly as the Holy Prophet and his companions understood it, interpreted the Holy Quran and Sunnah in their literal sense. They need to cease to submit Islam to foreign criteria and abandon every trace of apologetics. Islam needs no apology. The author has successfully argued that if the Muslims are to grow strong and vigorous they must possess supreme confidence in the absolute superiority of their faith over manmade philosophies. They must put Islam first and all else afterwards. Truth must never be compromised with falsehood for compromise is often the result of defeat. Muslims must be fearless in combating the forces against them and recognize them for what they are. This is no time to hedge and how. This is no time to mince words. The truth must be spoken and fearlessly translated into action.[20]

Modernism, as defined by Maryam Jameelah opposed to Islam, appears under the guise of many different Labels-Communism, Socialism, Capitalism, Pragmatism, Positivism, Fascism, Nazism, Zionism, Kamalism, and Arab nationalism. A careful examination, however, will reveal all these modern ideologies, despite their mutual rivalries and hatreds, to be merely different branches of the same tree.

The author then goes on to describe the common features of modernism:

i) repudiation of the hereafter and having culminated in the bodily comfort and material prosperity as the worthwhile goal in life,

ii) man-worship under the guise of science and nationalism,

iii) rejection of transcendental values and having no faith in any objective as obsolete criterion for truth,

iv) to weaken the family ties and home life as much as possible through the major weapon of industrialization, urbanization and the "emancipation" of women,

v) ever-increasing freedom for illicit sex through exploitation and commercialization of the female bodies;

vi) contempt for aged and

vii) The inability to take a comprehensive view of human life.

This modernism, claims the author, is evil in theory as well as in practice. This evil is a basic and integral part of its guiding philosophy and corrupts the whole structure.[21]

6. Correspondence between Maulana Maudoodi and Maryam Jameelah

After her conversion to Islam when Maryam Jameelah was writing the articles in the defense of Islam and its culture for the magazine "*The Muslim Digest of Durban,* South Africa", suddenly in which she received an excellent

article of Maulana Maudoodi in the Digest. Immediately she wrote a letter to the editor of the magazine for his address. She was highly influenced by the thoughts of Maulana Maudoodi and consequently started to correspondence with him and carried on exchange their letters in the long period between 1960 and 1962. This correspondence was lateron published in a volume entitled "Correspondence between Maulana Maudoodi and Maryam Jameelah".[22]

First of all she described her conversion to Islam in New York in her letters to him and lastly her migration to Pakistan. They discussed a variety of issues from the discourse of Islam and the west. There issues were, of course, to Maryam Jameelah's personal spiritual concerns.[23]

These letters are providing the reasons for Maryam Jameelah's conversion to Islam and their combined condemnation of the materialistic culture of the west. Besides they provided a stimulating discussion of some important personalities and a commentary on historic events and developments in the Muslim countries.[24]

Soon after Margaret Marcus, now Maryam Jameelah, began a prolonged and concentrated study of Islamic literature in English translation in order to obtain more intimate knowledge at first-hand, what it personally meant to be a Muslim, and more detailed in-formation about current events in the Muslim countries than what was ordinarily available in newspapers and magazines, she began correspondence with a dozen young people in Arab world and Pakistan.

Most of these pen-friends did not last long because she soon grew bitterly disappointed with their westernized mode of living, their indifference and sometimes outright hostility towards Islamic faith and culture and their childish minds.

Finally the author decided to develop correspondence with mature and influential Muslim leaders especially among the Ulama. She exchanged letters with them by the close of 1960. although the activities of the Late Shaikh Hassan al-Banna and al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun had received abundant (though of course, derogatory) publicity in the New York press, Maulana Maudoodi and the Jama'at-e-Islami had not yet attracted much attention from American scholars and journalists. Al though for nearly a decade, she had been an avid reader of all books and periodicals in English, she could find on Islamic subjects, she had never heard of Maulana Maudoodi and knew nothing whatever of the Jama'at-e-Islami until she came across Mazharuddin Siddiqui's essay in *Islam the Straight Path* (edited by Kenneth Morgan, Ronald Press, New York, 1958). When by sheer chance the author found an excellent article in *The Muslim Digest*, Durban, under the same name, at once she was eager to correspond with a man with such uncommon merits, and wrote the editor of the magazine for his address.

Maryam Jameelah penned her first letter not expecting any more than a single brief reply expressing mutual sympathy for commonly shared ideals.

Then she could not possibly foresee that this correspondence would mark the most crucial period in her entire life history.

Maulana Maudoodi had no need to persuade Margaret Marcus to adopt Islam as she was already on the threshold of conversion and would have taken the final step even without his knowledge. Neither did Maulana Maudoodi exert any decisive impact upon the direction of my literary career. Because she had begun to write essays in defense of Islam more than a year before her acquaintance and the main outlines of her ideas were already firmly established long before they know of each other's existence. Nevertheless as a result of this correspondence and consequently a vast increase in knowledge and insight. She grew more articulate and her writings gained in depth and maturity.

These letters should be read keeping in view their historical background. In America, John F. Kennedy was President and the country had reached unprecedented heights of political power and economic prosperity. The so-called "Cold-War" between Communist Russia under Khrushchev and the western democracies had just begun to thaw. In Pakistan, President Ayyub Khan ruled unchallenged and in order to make his dictatorship secure, had imposed martial law and banned political parties, including the Jama'at-e-Islami. God-fearing Ulama were being harassed and intimidated for daring to criticize the high-handed and arbitrary enforcement of the un-Islamic Family Laws Ordinance against the will of the overwhelming majority of the people.

After three and a half years of costly and fruitless psycho analysis, and two years of hospitalization, I was just emerging from a long, unhappy adolescence filled with loneliness and frustration and was searching to find myself and my proper place in life. It was only due to All-Merciful and Compassionate Allah that at this stage, Maulana Maudoodi gave me opportunity for a useful life rich in fulfillment by providing the fertile soil from which my endeavors could grow and achieve their fullest expression."[25]

7. Islam Versus Ahl al-Kitab: Past and Present

This book is dedicated for those who want to combat the menace of Zionism and Christian missionary activities in Muslim lands.[26]

The book is an exhaustive commentary on the differences of the Jews, Christians and the Muslims and suggests that prima facie, what divides the followers of there faiths may be narrow but, in effect, the gulf that separates them is unbridgeable and their differences are irreconcilable. Many problems being faced by the Muslims that were hitherto remained unsolved have been exposed and critically examined. Actually, her themes are the traditional religious legacy of the west; the impact of materialism upon Judaism and Christianity and how the political scientific and military supremacy of the west has adversely affected the Muslims.

The work has also revealed another top secret the establishment of "Islamic Institutes" etc, by the Christians in the Muslim Countries. Their main purpose is nothing but to subvert the Islamic cause from within and to frustrate all attempts for genuine Islamic revival. In nut shell, Maryam Jameelah's efforts in this book are to meet the challenge and as such must be read very carefully by the Muslims. Islamic organizations are requested to produce such works in other languages also for opening the eye of those who are incapable of distinguishing between the chalk and the cheese.

To her the most destructive of all the Jewish conspiracies and evil designs in history, against the Muslims is the rise of modern Zionist movement which has recently exposed its intents and purposes and barbarous activities in the metropolis of Lebanon. If the said movement is not checked vigorously today it will shake the entire Muslim world tomorrow.[27]

This work is a thorough analysis of the Jewish and Christian mentality as illustrated by their history, their ideas, their leaders and their devotional practices. With her deepest knowledge of the literature and scriptures of the Jews and Christians, she examined the experiences of the working of their mind. The author has been able to expose every aspect of the west's mental outlook towards Islam in detail by quoting at length from western sources.[28]

Maryam Jameelah has laid bare emphasis on the aims of world of Jewry and Christian missions by showing that their enterprise aims for nothing less

than the expansion of western political, military, economic and cultural imperialism, total westernization of Muslim countries, the loss of political, economic and cultural independence of all Muslim territories and utter annihilation of Islamic way of life from the world. She has also focused attention on the methods employed to achieve these nefarious ends and the ways in which Muslims can combat these sinister design pursued by orientalism jointly with the Zionists and Christian missionaries. She has succeeded in showing that while racism and nationalism of Judaism make a mockery of its ethical teachings and Christianity's propagation of the doctrine of Trinity and vicarious atonement of mankind's sins by Jesus Christ nullify all alone moral values. Islam on the contrary, constitutes a complete, all-embracing and comprehensive faith as well as the way of life where the individual versus his society and the material versus spiritual aspects of his life are balanced into a perfect harmony.[29]

None can deny this is the greatest assault on Judaism and Christianity both in theory and practice coming from a Muslim pen for a very long time. How has she set about it? Firstly, it must be mentioned that the author's history places her at a position of advantage to perform such a task. She grew up in a Jewish family, a member of the Jewish minority in Christian America and then embraced Islam. Being a near insatiable bibliophile as well entitles her to a claim of inside knowledge of the Thrace faiths. All there assets are brought into

good use here. Likewise she explained a lengthy chapter on Judaism; firstly that is a well-documented outline of Jewish beliefs, culture, complexes, deviations and history. She provides an analysis of the background to the rise of Zionism and how a racist religion, garbed with modern political and military sophistry and bred on the support of western treachery and collusion, has later on grown into the menacing monstrosity of Zionism.

The second chapter contains the post energetic refutation of Christianity that she also given up. It is a historical, a moral, an academic and indeed, an outright refutation of Christianity. The author answers the usual Christian accusations against Islam with even greater vehemence. In this one sees how much she detests the apologetic approach of answering back. Rather she throws the whole table on the Christians. She gives a lucid and highly informative analysis of the aims and moods of operation of the Christian missionary. The last chapter is rounds off beautifully her arguments against racist Judaism and neo imperialist, man-made Christianity. She presents Islam as the only authentic religion through which mankind can be united. This book is Maryam Jameelah's best work to date.[30]

8. Islam in Theory and Practice

Another collection of essays intended for the non-Muslim reader interested in an unadulterated Islam in the light of a thorough analysis of all the most important movements for Islamic revival in recent times. The book is

suitable for the modern-educated Muslim who has never had an opportunity to know Islam in its undiluted purity.[31]

These essays have written for the educated non-Muslim who is interested tracing what Islam really means to the true believer and also for those of Muslim origin who, because of a modern rearing, never had the chance to embrace an unadulterated faith. Her book is not a comprehensive study of Islamic doctrines because other Muslim scholars have already accomplished their views for the people. Rather than she has an attempt to concentrate upon selected aspects of Islam and their practical applications which in her humble opinion have not been sufficiently dealt within English. Her main purpose is to introduce the true knowledge of Islam to the Muslims.

In the present book "Islam in Theory and Practice" in which she has explained of title of the first chapter of this book with her conversion from Judaism to Islam, that "Why I embraced Islam". Hence she wrote the short story of her spiritualism and intellectual journey, the short story is a very influenciable and significant. This book is divided into four parts.[32]

With the adoption Islam in her first part, she has reviewed of the agnostic humanism or Christianity on the basis of Islamic principles and discussed those matters which are misunderstood and proved to be wrong interpretation of the religion in the Islamic world that are common in the west.

In the second part concentrates upon those aspects of Islam that are most unacceptable to the modern mind in a straight forward and unapologetic manner, as the issues like the mental health and hygiene, Islamic manners, versus western etiquette, artistic, endeavour, politeness, the Arabian culture and its virtues and emancipation of Muslim women and her role in society and the essentials of Islamic society.

The third portion demonstrates how Islam has actually been put to practical work in recent times, thus proving to the skeptical that the way of life produced by this faith is by no means a "spent force" which exhausted its creativity a thousand years ago but on the contrary, that the urge throughout the world for an Islamic revival is gaining its strength day by day.

In this portion the prominent Muslim dignitaries and the revivalist movements in the entire Muslim world are appreciated with their policies and programmes like the movements of Shaikh Muahmmad bin Abdul Wahab, the Sanussis, the Mahdis, Shah Waliullah, Sayyid Ahmad Shahid, the Farāidis, Badee-u-Zaman Said Nursi, Jamaluddin Afghani, Sayyid Rashid Rida, Shaikh Hassan al-Banna and his al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun, Maulana Muhammad Ali Jauhar, Allama Muahmmad Iqbal, Maulana Sayyid Abul Ala Maudoodi and his Jama'at-e-Islami in Pakistan, Sultan Abdul Hamid II and prince Said Halim Pasha.

In conclusion is an analysis of the prospects for a universal Islamic renaissance and specific measures most conducive to transforming this mission into a reality.[33]

The book "Islam in Theory and Practice" is the inquiry of a restless soul, courageous and bold, frank and forthright, promising and challenging. The day of Islamic supremacy, this American-Jewish convert pleads, shall not be far away if only the Muslims realize their destiny, live up to ideals of Islam, strive to uphold the world of God in every walk of their lives to establish Islam in its entirety in political, social, economic, cultural and all other aspects. Then Islam would be a living force and not just an academic proposition. As in other writing of her Maryam Jameelah is at her best when she takes to account western philosophy, thought, ideals and practices. Her advantage is that she was brought up and nurtured in western society and educated and trained in the western tradition. So naturally she is better fitted to know its dark spots and the mainsprings of evil which have polluted western society and which are now corroding the foundations of Muslim society with its obnoxious influences. Like this she explained the personalities, movements and parties dedicated to the cause of the revival of Islam, particularly in her own age, have been very ably summed up and the penetrating eyes of the author have been able to assess remarkably well the real worth and status of persons and parties of the recent past and present. Few writers on Islam have that balanced outlook, that courage

to speak the truth, that integrity of mission, that maturity of thought and detailed grasp on the subject which this American-born lady displays in her shorter essays.[34]

9. Islam and Orientalism

This book has included the collection of six review essays. Actually the purpose of this collection is to provide the student with a full understanding of the ideological weapons of the orientalists which are being deliberately used to mislead the Muslim intelligentsia into cynicism, heresy and apostasy. She has narrated detailed works by such noted orientalists as Dr. Phillip K. Hitti, Dr. Kenneth Cragg, S.D. Goetin and Dr. Wilfred Cantwell Smith, Nadav Safran, H.A.R. Gibb, and Freeland Abbott. Her book exposes the defective scholarship, the fallacious arguments, the distorted presentation of facts and the prejudices that were penetrated in their writings. It is a typical of most other books of this kind. It is intended especially for college and university students who might have to depend upon the writings of these orientalists for their source material.[35]

The book is dedicated to all Muslim college and university students in Pakistan and abroad so that they gain a full appreciation of the conspiracy working for their ruin and what can be done to frustrate its malicious activities before it is too late. This work is essential to help rescue the modern educated Muslims from the fallacy of accepting these unscrupulous scholars as the authorities on Islam. Lastly, she is intended to show the Muslim reader how the

west seems for us prior to the middle of the 19^{th} century the bulk of western literature in which they were attacking on Islam. Maryam Jameelah wrote against them and preached a genuine Islamic teaching to the Muslim society.[36]

In the middle of the 19th century, the bulk of western literature attacked Islam on the purely theological basis of Christian dogmas. As the Christian missionary enterprise became increasingly identified with the aims of British and French imperialism the emphasis gradually shifted from the religious to secular the other argues. At the turn of the 20th century, the favourite technique of the missionary was to claim that Christianity was responsible for all the achievements credited to the western way of life. Thus Christianity and western civilization are inseparable and indistinguishable. The theological values of Christianity became more and more subordinate to this theme, while she collected whatever books from the public libraries whence she received to knowledge on the Arabs and Islam from the numerous works all written from the viewpoint of the Christian missionary. Orientalism or Zionism and read their ideas, she felt that they have destroyed all teachings of Islam. After all she studied more and more on the Islamic teachings. Finally she was attracted to Islam because it is alone among all the religions of the world, offers the most satisfying and convincing answers to all the great questions of life while the extant teachings of other faiths are restricted and fragmentary. She realized that Islam is a strong and complete religion.[37]

Islam demands that the individual devote his concentrated attention towards fulfilling his duties of worshipping Allah and serving his fellow beings and abandon as useless all vain pursuits which distract him from that end.

According to Islamic teachings, she writes "Life is not a pleasure trip but an examination. Every minute of our lives we are being tested by God for our faith or lack of faith and thus offering and misfortune we indure on this earth is not the decisive calamity but only part of the testing." She demonstrated some of the learned orientalists and intelligent politicians of the west who are thoroughly aware of these facts. Hence, the special departments in universities and seminaries scattered throughout Europe and America dedicated to understand Islam only to enable its enemies to destroy it. After embracing Islam she had identified some scholars and political leaders within the Muslim community openly collaborating with the Christian and Jewish orientalists in repudiating the injunctions of Holy Quran and Sunnah, Hadith as obsolete and no longer relevant to the modern age. She told the Muslim society that their so-called "progressives" must be traitors because their views as expressed in their public utterances and writings did not at all differ from the non-Muslim "specialists" on Islamic affairs and also because the former never fails to receive the most enthusiastic support from the latter. She had dismayed by the anti-Islamic propaganda that had been fed to her mind since childhood that as soon as she converted to Islam, she was determined to compile a book exposing

the full ugliness of this malicious prejudice for what it is. Hence she compiled this book as the fruit of many years of study in New York and Lahore.[38]

She convinced that Islam was the first and foremost target of all anti-religious propaganda because it vehemently rejects moral relativity and staunchly continues to uphold the transcendental ideals. She confessed that Islamic teachings are the best in the world. She wrote in her book that western historians are now generally willing to recognize the greatness of Islamic revealed a thousand years ago and grudgingly acknowledge its contribution to medieval European learning. They assert that Muslim glory has departed forever, its creativity utterly exhausted since the 13th century. The "antiquated" way of life of traditional Islamic society is held responsible for the weakness of the Muslim countries today with their poverty, ignorance, diseases, apathy and backwardness. Therefore the orientalists conclude, the only road to progress is an uncritical adoption of western materialism.[39]

10. Islam and Western Society: A Refutation of the Modern Way of Life

This is a collection of ten essays which are written especially for modern-educated Muslim. In these the evils of western way of life have seen exposed essays and the readers are asked to follow faithfully the tenets of Islam which alone can give them real happiness. Islam stands for an all-round progress of man; one can be a great philosopher, scientist, physician, artist

engineer, etc. without violating the injunctions of the *shariah.* Islam is not only a collection of rituals, but is a complete and perfect code of life. It can give us birth of material and spiritual happiness, provided we are prepared to be guided by it; the external glamour of western world is misleading and is be consciously guarded against.[40]

Actually she wrote these between October 1971 and August 1975. She discussed these issues specifically for the Muslim students from Asia or Africa studying in American or European colleges and universities in order to warn them of the fatal pitfalls of modernization. She refuted with arguments the modern way of life. This is not advisable to copy the west blindly and uncritically. This approach does not provide any remedy for the social problems of the so-called under-developed "poor" countries of the east, but rather only aggravate the predicament in which they now find themselves in addition to creating numerous new troubles exported by the west under the slogan of modernity.[41]

Since in these chapters of book there is much overlapping of the various aspects of the same subject dealt with here, repetition could not be avoided. She only hopes that whatever there essays would serve the purpose of emphasis rather than monotony. The author does not think it sufficient merely to denounce westernism as evil and inimical to the spirit of the Islamic faith and its historical culture. Rather she feels that such condemnation will have no

effect on the educated reader until the all-embracing evil of contemporary life in every aspect is thoroughly exposed in careful detail by quoting at length from western sources.

Thus the reader will not conclude that the views of the author are merely the result of her personal prejudices and narrow mindedness but will instead join insight into what is wrong with the modern way of life as related by recognized western authorities in their own words. Philosophically, this book takes its stand against the evolutionary relativistic, secular outlook prevalent among the political leadership in Asia and Africa today which equates "change" with "progress" and upholds absolute transcendental standards as essential for the survival of civilization.[42]

In the opinion of the author, contemporary materialistic ideologies do not owe their triumph over the traditional religions and philosophies of Asia to any intrinsic superiority or inherent merit but merely to their ability to outshout their rivals. Western methods of conquest were simple. As Theodor Herzl, the founder of modern Zionism, himself write in his personal diary on May 12, 1898; "Noise is everything! In truth, noise amounts to a great deal. A sustained noise is in itself a noteworthy achievement. World history is nothing but noise: noise of arms and of advancing ideas. Men must put noise to use!"

The adoption of western culture and values by increasing multitudes of Muslims is the greatest menace to the survival of the Islamic way of life in

history, as the author observer. Their very identity as Muslims and the entire foundation of their faith in Islam is being undermined by the combined technological weapons of western ideological propaganda. The worship of Allah and submission to His will through wholehearted obedience to Divine revelation, is rapidly giving way to a new idolatry of the crudest sort, as more and more of Muslims prostrate themselves at the feet of the contemporary duties of Change, Modernization, Development and "Progress". According to the author, "our attitude thus towards modernity is no academic matter of tedious "research"; it is for us no less than a question of life or death."

It does not mean that there is absolutely no value in any of the positive achievements or experience of the west from which the Muslims could profit, clarifies the author. Beneficial and stimulating cultural exchange between different peoples and cultures has always been practiced universally since the emergence of man and historic Islamic civilization, located as it was at the vital crossroads between Asia, Africa and Europe, was no exception. What is condemned is not normal cultural exchange accomplished with an open, confident, critical and independent mind, but blind, indiscriminate, sterile imitation which results in cultural desolation, social and moral anarchy, defeatism, inferiority-complexes and object slavery of the soul, she concludes.[43]

In the first chapter she explained how did the Holy Prophet leave a tremendous impact on her life. In the coming chapters of the book she discussed

the issues like "Westernization a Panoramic View", "Modernization our Panacea?", "The American Metamorphism – Revolution or Disintegration", "The Feminist movement and the Muslim Women", "Western Civilization versus Islamic civilization", "The Call of Islam to Modern Man", "Is Western Civilization Universal?" and "Is Western Civilization the Route to Human Welfare?" etc.[44]

11. A Manifesto of the Islamic Movement

The writer has nullified the western claim of supremacy, cultural dominance and civilizational perfection and has proposed the Islamic alternative. Two thousand five hundred years age, the Greek philosophers announced to the world that mankind could achieve spiritual perfection and a heaven of virtue on earth entirely through the unaided application of his rational faculties. In fourteenth–fifteenth century Florence, the humanists were determined to prove the full development of the individual without having hampered by the restraint of any external authority as the ultimate purpose of life. Now the leaders of contemporary thought inform the Muslims that western civilization must be right because it is "advanced", "modern", and "progressive", and always looks to the future while Islamic civilization is hopelessly backward, medieval and obsolete because it depends on the past for guidance.

Maryam Jameelah analyses the poverty and backwardness that have penetrated the Muslim world. To the author, poverty is caused by exploitation and injustice and can be dominated only when the source of the selfishness and greed innate in human nature, is severed at the roots. She argues that poverty will continue to grow more and more acute despite all progress in scientific knowledge, until "experts" accept as fact that the so-called economic problem is a moral problem.[45]

The author unambiguously asserts that the only road to national economic prosperity is complete independence; the Muslims always strive to thread the middle path and avoid extremes; and that a universal revolutionary movement is essential and Muslim need only practical implementation which can be achieved as soon as the majority of Muslims are determined to do it under effective and organized leadership.[46]

12. Western Civilization Condemned by Itself

There are two volumes of her book in which included an anthology with extensive quotations from influential materialist. Philosophers from ancient Greece and Rome to modern times and popular American books describing the evils of modern societies in detail to prove why western civilization in all its varied aspects is totally evil both in theory and practice preface, introduction, notes and appendix by the editor.[47]

Another book of Maryam Jameelah whose name is "Islam attacked from without and from within: An anthology of anti-Islamic propaganda".

The book is an anthology quoting from the most dangerous enemies of Islam, representive arguments of anti-Islamic propaganda. Her main aim had no show in detail how Islam in all its aspects has been attacked by western "orientalists" and westernized Muslims from within. But she would to want above all else, to expose the mentality of their adversaries.[48]

She discussed to apply comprehensive anthology and intended for all ulama, scholars' writers and workers for Islamic revivals so that they may fully understand notes and epilogue by the editor.[49]

She is also written her introduction commentary in this book. Among the westernized Muslims she consisted Ziya Gokalp, Dr. Taha Hussein and Asaf A. Fyzee vice-chancellor of Kashmir University of which she is given reviews all these scholars. Firstly she used to beginning of the anthology and wrote a long preface and finished with the conclusion and concise epilogue in the last.[50]

13. Is Western Civilization Universal?

This booklet basically consists of the three parts. The first part starting with the western scholars' claim of their civilization being universal and the pre-industrial heritage of all non-European peoples being obsolete concludes in the strong objections raised by Maryam Jameelah. To justify its claim to universality, a civilization must propagate universal, moral and spiritual values.

Contemporary culture is conspicuous by the complete absence of such values. Ideologically it has nothing to offer but naked selfishness, irresponsible pleasure-seeking and pure and unadulterated materialism.[51]

The second part of the book concentrates on the western civilization's parochial nature and proves that this is exclusively reserved for white Europeans only. The third part concludes in an earnest urge for Islamic renaissance, for establishing a full-blooded Islamic state and for the Islamic unity against all the adversaries of Islam in the spirit of jihad.[52]

14. Who is Maudoodi?

It is a short book whose she wrote on the life and works of Maulana Maudoodi as a champion for revivalist Islam in the 20th century with extensive quotations from his books and speeches throughout his forty year career.

She also composed "an appraisal of some aspects of Maulana Maudoodi's thought and life in the *Islamic Quarterly* Vol. 31, 1987, A.D. She was very much impressed by Maulana Maudoodi's thought and corresponded with him since the long times. She says Maulana Maudoodi's teachings demanded a bold, direct re-interpretation of Quran and Sunnah, freed from all unhealthy accretions from the past. He presented to the people his call all alone, all by himself, unwilling to acknowledge, much less submit to any other "spiritual authorities reverted by the ulama and sufis of his day". In launching his Islamic movement in the Indo-Pak, sub-continent, his aim was not mere

patch-work reforms, much les did he intend to attempt any restoration of traditional Islamic civilization as it had existed in the pre-colonial days. His goal was a total revolutionary break with the medieval part and its so-called Muslim society which had strayed so far from the true Islam.[53]

To provide the public with first-hand information of his work, she has quoted extensively from Maulana Maudoodi's writings and press statements at all stages of his career. Those who want to pursue this more deeply should diligently study his many books in the original Urdu or translations. Because Maulana Maudoodi is by nature very polite and speaks about himself and his private affairs liberally. They insist that he must write his autobiography without delay. But if, due to poor health, he cannot, this pamphlet is presented to the reader with the hope that it will inspire some gifted Muslim pen to treat this subject with greater originality, thoroughness, scholarship and literary merit, Maryam Jameelah. Besides she praised him, and discussed with him of his many books, his works and thoughts. She has explained, though briefly, every one aspect of his life in this book.[54]

She has also discussed the main theme of his series of articles written by him during 1939, 1940 under the title of "Musalman aur Maujooda Siyasi Kashmakash" criticizing the secular politics of pre-independence India. His pamphlet entitled the "*Qadiani Problem*" that declared the Ahmadis as non-

Muslims on the basis of his arguments provided from the Quran and Sunnah, was also appreciated and fully supported by Maryam Jameelah.[55]

15. Why I Embraced Islam?

It has included two essays in which she has written upon her life that "How I became converting to Islam" and other essays, How I discovered the Holy Quran and its impact on her life. She also wrote the Holy Prophet and His impact on her life. She narrated her impressions genuinely and described her interest to Islamic books and Muslim scholars as well.[56]

16. Islam and the Muslim Woman Today

This book having comprised the five remarkable essays about the role model for a Muslim woman, her problems in the modern society, how the west has hijacked her for her own purposes under the following titles:

1) The Muslim woman and Her Role in Society.

2) Duties of the Muslim Mother.

3) Qassim Amin and the "Emancipation of the Muslim Woman".

4) Islam and the "Emancipation" of the Muslim Woman.

5) The Feminist Movement and the Muslim Woman.[57]

These essays are related to the human species and express the abilities of woman in the whole society in the light of Islam.

Maryam Jameelah criticizes those modernists who regard the social position of the Muslim woman as inferior on the basis of Islamic teachings concerning: (1) guardianship in marriage; (2) polygamy; (3) divorce; (4) *purdah* or the strict segregation of the sexes. Hence a growing reformist movement afoot in all Muslim countries to condemn the foundation of Muslim society since its inception as un-Islamic and enforce laws in conformity with those prevailing in non-Muslim lands.

Maryam Jameelah by this book tries to demonstrate the inherent superiority of those Islamic teachings pertaining to women and why to tamper with is mischief-making of the first magnitude. In this context the author evaluates critically the feminist movement launched by the Egyptian scholar Qasim Amin (1865-1908) by his famous book entitled as *The New Woman*. The author declares this book a "glaring illustration of the utter enslavement of the Modern Muslim to Christian and humanist ideals."[58] She also condemns Dr. Muhammad Muqaddam, Vice-Chancellor of Tehran University who was reported by The Pakistan Times, Lahore, October 19, 1967 to have stated *purdah* as "reactionary obscurantism" and insisted upon female "emancipation". The learned critic has well recognized the movement for "female emancipation" as a "malignant conspiracy to destroy the home and family and eventually wreck our entire society. The cheap slogans of "women's

rights", "emancipation" and "progress" only serve as a smokescreen to obscure its real intentions."[59]

17. Islam and Our Social Habits

This book consists of three essays in which she explained the Islamic outlook. These essays are:

(i) Islamic Manners Versus Western Etiquette.

(ii) Islam and Cleanliness.

(iii) Islam and Mental Health.

She discussed our health, manners, mind and our social habits in Islamic perspective and that one of most serious problems facing modern society is the epidemic of nervous and mental disorders. In first essay she has emphasized on the modern way of life, which is a much higher degree of comfort and contributes to gracious and spacious living which in its turn culminates to the progress of the world in all directions.[60]

She has also explained the "Islamic culture in theory and practice", in which are included tow essays *The Muslim Mind*, and other the *Essentials of an Islamic Community*. Besides she discussed some great movements in the Arab world of the recent past as:

(i) The movement of Shaikh Muhammad bin Abdul Wahab.

(ii) The Sanussi Movement

(iii) The Mahdi movement of the Sudan and The Fara'idi Movement.

(iv) And her another book of Movement "A Great Islamic Movement in Turkey".[61]

18. Shaikh Hasan al Banna and Al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun

Shaikh Hasan al Banna, Shahid and Al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun. It is a book also included in the lengthy title of the author named *Islam in Theory and Practice*. The book provides a detailed account of the life, personality and the movement Hasan al-Banna launched for the Islamic renaissance. Since the author herself was committed with the Islamic awakening her affectionately description of this great Islamic leader was quiet natural.

Hasan al-Banna (1906-1949) was a zealous and genius leader working for the Islamic cause even at a tender age, Maryam Jameelah narrates. When only a little child, he and his brother organized *The Society for the Enjoinment of Good and the Prohibition of Evil.* He himself composed a proclamation printed by hand exhorting men not to wear gold rings or silk clothes. When he was a student in the *Dar al-Ulum*, a teachers training school in Cairo, he brilliantly once expressed his future plan since all the senior students were asked for their final composition to demonstrate their future programme. Shaikh Hasan al-Banna wrote:

> "I will be a counselor and teacher. Even if I spend the whole day for the better part of the year teaching children, I will not neglect

instructing their fathers in the objectives of Islam, sometimes by writing and at other times making speeches and holding conversations and also by roaming and making trips. I have prepared myself for the former task with a spirit of thankfulness and optimism and for the latter with perseverance and sacrifice."[62]

This was the spirit that persuaded Hasan al-Banna to lay the foundation of al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun when he was transferred to Ismailia as a teacher in 1928. The motive of this organization was from the very start to construct comprehensive Islamic movement to lead an entire generation imbued with Islamic ideals applied to politics, economics, and all areas of social life.[63]

In his writings Shaikh Hasan al-Banna advised his followers to adhere strictly to certain principles:

i) He was determined that al-Ikhwan would never become a battleground of theological disputes.

ii) He always mistrusted the intentions of notables who requested association with the movement because he suspected they wanted only riches and worldly benefits for themselves.

iii) The writings of Ikhwan stressed the necessity for a gradual process of growth and development of the movement which must first gain strong popular support of its ideals before capturing power, Maryam Jameelah narrates.[64]

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